
Christian Order

Summary of Contents for October, 1980

ON HURT IN THE CHURCH TODAY

J. C. L. Inman

REFLECTIONS ON THE N.P.C.

The Editor

THE CHURCH, POLITICAL ORGANIZATION
AND VIOLENCE : 2

*Archbishop Romero
and Bishop Damas*

LETTER FROM A LAYMAN

Anthony Hobson

INTERNAL RECONCILIATION :
A NECESSITY

Kevin Hanlon

May I ask those who have not yet renewed their subscriptions to be so kind as to do so without delay. Very few are still outstanding. It would be a great help if they were to come in. Thank you.

Paul Crane, S.J.

Contents

Page

- 450 DULL DISH *The Editor*
- 453 INTERNAL RECONCILIATION:
A NECESSITY *Kevin Hanlon, M.A.*
- 458 THE POPE TO HIS PRIESTS: 2
Pope John Paul II
- 469 ON HURT IN THE CHURCH
TODAY *J. C. L. Inman*
- 475 REFLECTIONS ON THE
N.P.C. *The Editor*
- 486 LETTER FROM A LAYMAN
Anthony Hobson
- 492 CANTICLE OF THE SUN
St. Francis of Assisi
- 493 THE CHURCH, POLITICAL
ORGANIZATION AND
VIOLENCE: 2
*The late Archbishop Romero and
Bishop Arturo Damas*
- 509 BOOK REVIEWS
Paul Crane, S.J.

Christian Order is a magazine devoted to Catholic Social Teaching and incisive comment on current affairs in Church and State; at home and abroad; in the political, social and industrial fields. It is published ten times a year.

It is published by Father Paul Crane, S.J., from 65, Belgrave Rd., London, S.W.1. This is the sole postal address to which all communications concerning *Christian Order* should be sent.

Christian Order is obtainable only by subscription and from this address. In the case of those desiring more than one copy, these are obtainable at the subscription rate and should be paid for in advance.

The annual subscription to *Christian Order* is £1 in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland; \$3.00 in the United States, Canada and Australia; elsewhere, according to the approximate sterling rate of exchange, in the currency of the country concerned or any convenient currency.

Air-mail rates as follows:

U.S.A., Canada
India, etc.—£4.00, U.S. \$8.00
Australia—£4.50, A. \$8.00
N. Zealand—£4.50, N.Z. \$8.00

If You Change Your Address:

Please let us know two or three weeks ahead if possible and please send us both new and old addresses. Thank you.

Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

VOLUME 21

OCTOBER

NUMBER 10

Dull Dish

THE EDITOR

A PATHETICALLY false assumption would seem to underlie the outlook of those—clerics, mostly—who see what they think of as the Church of the future in terms of the secularized ordinariness that already dominates their outlook and their lives. The assumption is that the extension of this ordinariness into the lives of Catholics generally will bring fulfilment and, with it, peace of soul to the members of the “new”, post-conciliar Church. In their view, secular fulfilment is capable of containing, thereby of contenting the spiritual soul—the mind and heart—of man.

The fallacy here is patent; its general effect pernicious. Christians, they say, should be as other men; this way they will find themselves. This is the evil. It adds up to a denial of the Redemption and explains the move, gaining strength within progressive circles in the Church, to strip Christ of His divinity and make of Him no more than a superman or, as the long-running musical would have it, “Jesus Christ: Superstar”; someone you can feel comfortable with on purely human terms. The blasphemous “Life of Brian” goes further, of course. This is always the way. It makes the Son of God someone you can laugh at in purely human terms. The protagonists of secularized ordinariness as a way of life within the “new” Church have lost sight of Christianity’s central point, which is that it makes Chris-

tians different from other men because redeemed by Christ, who was God as well as man. To urge them, in the name of Christ, to be the same is to stand Christianity on its head. Baptism means new life, not a wash-and-brush-up of the old. For the Christian, fulfilment and, with it, the realization of identity, is in Christ, not apart from Him; the whole is a by-product that comes to those who turn to Christ in love and to others for love of Him and without concern for themselves. This is true renewal. Its essence is forgetfulness of self for Christ's sake; in this way dying and, behold, we live. Fulfilment is through forgetfulness of self. This is the Christian paradox. For the secularist it is not so; fulfilment is through direct concern with oneself and for one's own sake; concern with others is of value as an aid to this process. This is the pagan reality, the dead-opposite of the Christian ideal; an old slavery, preached now within the Church as the new Christianity; in fact, the deadly poison of an old and evil paganism that has surfaced once again amongst us not as evil, but as good. One recognizes here the hand of the Great Deceiver. The opposite of Christ's message is being promulgated as His truth and many are falling under its spell.

What masquerades as renewal today within the Church is precisely that drive for secularized ordinariness, which is away from the supernatural because it is, of its nature, without roots in the supernatural. Thus it is forced to seek expression in exterior change because incapable of satisfying the interior longing in man's heart which is for the supernatural and which can find ultimate satisfaction in it alone. By the same count the quest for exterior change must be cumulative. The secularism which encases the minds of its promoters renders them incapable of anything else. All they can do when one set of exterior changes fails to satisfy is to go for another. They have no other remedy. There can be no end to the process, so long as the supernatural remains a closed book where they are concerned. This is why we have been plagued with so massive a series of rootless changes within the post-conciliar Church. This accounts for the restlessness within it. The progressive drive for secularized ordinariness as the new way of life for the Christian can bring nothing else.

Ironically enough, this restlessness which comes from the discarding of the Holy Spirit of God, is made by the progenitors of the new secularism to pass for His stirring within the people of God. This, they say, is true renewal. Neither does the thing stop here. Once begun, they say, the process cannot be halted. The Spirit has taken over; the People of God are on the march precisely because he has taken over. The Spirit is at work within them; therefore, they can brook no opposition, not even when it comes from Supreme Authority within the Church itself, for the people *are* the Church. Opposed to the Spirit moving within them and moving them forward is that dead, organizational thing, the Institutional Church, with a Pope at its head who seems concerned only to use his authority, as his predecessors have done so often, to confine and constrict the freedom of the Spirit within men. Look what he did to poor Hans Kung! Under the circumstances, the only thing to do is to by-pass the Pope's authority. The People of God, moved by the Spirit, are greater than he. What you have here of course, is what comes inevitably out of secularism with its discarding of the supernatural — the making of autonomous man. The end of the road which would find fulfilment through secularized ordinariness means not so much the abandonment of God as His replacement by man, for man must have his gods. In this case he has one. It is himself. Thus, the story ends where it began, in the Garden of Eden: "If you eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, you will be like gods"—as good, that is, as God. This, precisely, is what we are being asked to do and be by the protagonists of the new secularism, which is no more than the old paganism, within the Church. All they have to offer by way of renewal is the same old, dreary dish of cold rice-pudding. The prophets of the New Christianity are hardly to be congratulated on their powers of imagination. They are dull fellows, I am afraid.

The time has come, surely for an attempt, at least, at reconciliation between warring factions to Right and Left within the Church. By way of preparation they might start reading the New Testament with this end in view, as the Author of this article has done. His conclusions are given below.

Internal Reconciliation : a Necessity

A LAYMAN'S VIEW

KEVIN HANLON, M.A.

IN the challenging and disturbing post-Vatican-2 days I have found it reassuring to realise that the Primitive Church had its troubles. A basic cause of its problems seems to be similar to the cause of our troubles since Vatican 2. For centuries the Jews had built a secure religious system based on the great bastions of the Law and the Temple centred on Jerusalem. Then came Christ replacing them. The barriers created by Law and Temple were to go and all people were invited to share in the New Life of Grace, which meant a relationship of Love with the Father through Christ. The challenge Jesus brought involved even His followers in conflict as they sought to live out, and work out, the implications of His life and message. Vatican 2 came as a similar kind of shock. Since the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic Church has weathered the storm of the Reformation by uniformity brought about by the Index of Forbidden Books, The Catechism of the Council of Trent, the Breviary and the Missal and so on, with Latin as the universal language of the Church. With the coming of Vatican 2 all these bastions seemed to go. Conflict ensued among Catholics, and even a spirit of persecution emerged in various quarters as people sought to come to terms with the teachings of the Council.

The New Testament Reassures

I find a study of the New Testament reassuring in these confused times. It seems to provide us with possible remedies, or the basis of remedies, for the situation of conflict in which we find ourselves. In what follows I have picked out what I consider to be some of the salient features of the present situation, and tried to discover appropriate remedies within the New Testament, which may help to resolve our difficulties. "I am for the Latin Mass Society", "I am for Pro Fide", "I am for the Renewal Movement", "I am for Charismatic Renewal"—seem to be some of the predominant banners displayed during the past fifteen years. The fact that such groups have emerged is a symptom of the state of the Church in this Island. The really disturbing feature is not the groups themselves but their apparent isolation from each other. Their gatherings appear to be held for the most part outside the normal parish community. Catholics travel miles to attend a meeting of the group to which they give allegiance. It appears that the parish community, the centre of Church life in this country for many centuries, cannot contain or cope with this post-Vatican-2 phenomenon. Yet the importance of the parish has recently been stressed by Pope John Paul: "Whatever one may think, the parish is still a major point of reference for the Christian people" (*Catechesis in Our Time*).

Another disturbing feature is not just the apparent isolation of the groups from each other, but the seeming absence of any serious attempt by local Church communities to bring them together. Yet, statements that there is no common ground between the polarised groups, and therefore they cannot be brought together, do not bear close scrutiny, for all parties claim allegiance to the Catholic Church and, through it, to Christ. Surely, it is the Church centred on Christ which should itself constitute the common ground on which to meet and seek mutual reconciliation in a spirit of Christian forbearance and understanding.

A further disturbing aspect is, precisely, the lack of mutual forbearance displayed by most of the groups.

Although one can understand the reasons for its absence, one cannot agree with it. Some seem preoccupied with the Church from Trent to Vatican I. Others seem to see the Church only in terms of Vatican 2. Both viewpoints neglect developments in the Church for almost 2000 years, and take little count of the fact that the Reformation was not the only cleavage among Christians that the Church has had to face. Cleavage was present in New Testament times. It was present in the highly charismatic Church in Corinth, where St. Paul had to put speaking in tongues in its place (not obliterate speaking in tongues). Party factions based on individuals (shades of our own day) became a feature of Church life in that cosmopolitan city—"I belong to Paul", "I belong to Apollo", "I belong to Cephas (Peter)", "I belong to Christ" (1 Corinthians, 1:12). The last group may have been claiming to be the only genuine followers of Christ. St. Paul sided with no one, but told them that strife in the Christian community was not Christian behaviour. He challenged them to see themselves as sharing life with Christ, God's temples in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt. Perhaps this is the realization we lack at the moment.

The significance of the Christian community receives its greatest emphasis in the liturgy of the Church; and it is not surprising, therefore that the debate within the Church is at its sharpest here, or that, in this area, the lack of forbearance should be at its keenest. Some shudder at the thought of vernacular folk Masses, while others want to have nothing to do with the Mass in Latin. Again, the historical perspective is lacking. The first Mass was probably said in Aramaic (the language of Christ) as the Last Supper in a private room. Across the centuries the Mass has varied in its form and people have had their own preferences regarding the form. Even in the so-called secure years before Vatican 2, people expressed preferences for Low Mass, Missa Cantata or Missa Solemnis. People are still seeking their preferences today by touring around. But why should they have to go seeking for the Mass in which they find communion with God in Christ? If our local communities had the forbearance we need so desperately, there could be a variety of Masses—Tridentine, New

Latin, Folk, Concelebrated and so on. The fact that we have not got this situation shows the urgency of the need for the spirit of Christian forbearance.

Forbearance in the Primitive Church

The Primitive Church itself needed a large dose of Christian forbearance. It was faced with an issue just as big as the post-Vatican-2 Church. The Apostolic Church was faced with the issue of pagan Gentiles coming into table-fellowship with Christians of strict Jewish background. Strict Jewish Christians wished them to be circumcised and to keep the Old Law as part of their Christian life. Other Christians saw such requirements as a bar and hindrance to the spreading of the Gospel. This was such an explosive issue that it caused a face-to-face encounter between Peter and Paul (Letter to the Galatians, Chapter 2). According to St. Luke, it took a council in 48/49 A.D. to decide on the issue. The Council of Jerusalem took a tolerant line and allowed entry into the Church without circumcision. But, in return, it called for sacrifices from the Gentile Christians (cf St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 15). Perhaps there is another lesson for us to learn here—the need for mutual agreement between opposing factions for the good of the Church and the spread of the Gospel.

Coming Together in Christ

Although there was probably no more radical Christian than St. Paul in Apostolic times, he was not prepared to give scandal. Even though he preached freedom in Christ from the Jewish Law, a freedom that went as far as eating meat from pagan temples sold in the markets, he himself would not eat such meat if it gave scandal. All things are lawful, he said, but not all things are helpful in the building up of the Christian community. He advised seeking the good of one's Christian neighbour, and not one's own (1 Cor. 10:23-24). Perhaps another lesson for us today.

I find the reading of St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians salutary. The kind of problems he had to cope with in Corinth have a familiar ring now—the issues connected with understanding the Faith, scandal in the community

through immorality, questions of sex and marriage, the objective reality of the Resurrection, charismatic gifts, the place of women in the Church, behaviour at the Christian Assembly (the Mass). The advice he gave on these matters seems designed for the building-up and bringing closer together of the Christian Community.

Community, coming together in Christ, is the hallmark of the New Testament. Coming together to build up the Christian Community—something which seems so alien at the moment. Coming together in Christ, giving allegiance to Christ and not to individuals or party groupings. Coming together in a spirit of patient forbearance, so lacking at the present time. Coming together to avoid scandal. One wonders, in fact, if we are giving scandal by our present divisions. And perhaps their presence in our midst is the reason why everybody appears frustrated, no matter where they place their allegiance at the moment. This is not surprising, since the Church Militant has turned into the Civil War Church and civil wars are noted for their viciousness and bitterness. The very people who have so much in common tear themselves apart through their lack of forbearance and their unwillingness to come together for the well-being of the whole Church.

Unity in Christ is the message I get from the New Testament. This does not mean uniformity. Members of polarised groups within the Church are reacting against the impositions of uniformity in one way or another. For Catholics today unity must be worked out, and lived out in one way or another together. The only place where this can be done effectively is within the local Parish. This will require great patience, understanding and forbearance. But, surely, this is what living in Christ is all about.

This second part of Pope John Paul's letter to the priests of the world deals appropriately and very positively with priestly celibacy, along with other topics which concern the priesthood and which are of great importance.

The Pope to His Priests: 2

Meaning of Celibacy

ALLOW me at this point to touch upon the question of priestly celibacy. I shall deal with it summarily, because it has already been considered in a profound and complete way during the Council, and subsequently in the Encyclical *Sacerdotalis Caelibatus*, and again at the ordinary session of the 1971 Synod of Bishops. This reflection has shown itself to be necessary both in order to present the matter in a still more mature way, and also in order to explain even more deeply the meaning of the decision that the Latin Church took so many centuries ago and to which she has sought to be faithful, and desires to maintain this fidelity also in the future. The importance of the question under consideration is so great, and its link with the language of the Gospel itself so close, that in this case we cannot reason with categories different from those used by the Council, the Synod of Bishops and the great Pope Paul VI himself. We can only seek to understand this question more deeply and to respond to it more maturely, freeing ourselves from the various objections that have always—as happens today too—been raised against priestly celibacy, and also freeing ourselves from the different interpretations that appeal to criteria alien to the Gospel, to Tradition and to the Church's *Magisterium*—criteria, we would add, whose “anthropological” correctness and basis in fact are seen to be very dubious and of relative value.

Nor must we be too surprised at all the objections and criticisms which have intensified during the postconciliar period, even though today in some places they seem to be growing less. Did not Jesus Christ, after He had presented the Disciples with the question of the renunciation of mar-

riage "for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven", add these significant words: "Let anyone accept this who can?" (32) The Latin Church has wished, and continues to wish, referring to the example of Christ the Lord Himself, to the apostolic teaching and to the whole Tradition that is proper to her, that *all those who receive the sacrament of Orders should embrace this renunciation "for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven"*. This tradition, however, is linked with respect for different traditions of other Churches. In fact, this tradition constitutes a characteristic, a peculiarity and a heritage of the Latin Catholic Church, a tradition to which she owes much and in which she is resolved to persevere, in spite of all the difficulties to which such fidelity could be exposed, and also in spite of the various symptoms of weakness and crisis in individual priests. We are all aware that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels"; (33) yet we know very well that it is precisely a treasure.

Why is it a treasure? Do we wish thereby to reduce the value of marriage and the vocation to family life? Or are we succumbing to a Manichean contempt for the human body and its functions? Do we wish in some way to devalue love, which leads a man and a woman to marriage and the wedded unity of the body, thus forming "one flesh?" (34) How could we think and reason like that, if we know, believe and proclaim, following St. Paul, that marriage is a "great mystery" in reference to Christ and the Church? (35) However, none of the reasons whereby people sometimes try to "convince us" of the inopportuneness of celibacy corresponds to the truth, the truth that the Church proclaims and seeks to realize in life through the commitment to which Priests oblige themselves before ordination. The essential, proper and adequate reason, in fact, is contained in the truth that Christ declared when He spoke about the renunciation of marriage for the safe of the Kingdom of Heaven, and which St. Paul proclaimed when he wrote that each person in the Church has his or her own particular gifts. (36) Celibacy is precisely a "gift of the Spirit". A similar though different gift is contained in the vocation to true and faithful married love, directed towards procreation according to the flesh, in the very lofty context of the sacrament of Matrimony. It is obvious that this gift

is fundamental for the building up of the great community of the Church, the People of God. But if this community wishes to respond fully to its vocation in Jesus Christ, there will also have to be realized in it, in the correct proportion, that other "gift", the gift of celibacy "for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven". (37)

Why does the Latin Catholic Church link this gift not only with the life of those who accept the strict program of the evangelical counsels in Religious Institutes but also with the vocation to the hierarchical and ministerial priesthood? She does it because celibacy "for the sake of the Kingdom" is not only an eschatological sign; it also has a great social meaning, in the present life, for the service of the People of God. Through his celibacy, the Priest becomes the "man for others", in a different way from the man who, by binding himself in conjugal union with a woman, also becomes, as husband and father, a man "for others", especially in the radius of his own family: for his wife, and, together with her, for the children, to whom he gives life. The Priest, by renouncing this fatherhood proper to married men, seeks another fatherhood and, as it were, even another motherhood, recalling the words of the Apostle about the children whom he begets in suffering. (38) These are children of his spirit, people entrusted to his solicitude by the Good Shepherd. These people are many, more numerous than an ordinary human family can embrace. The pastoral vocation of priests is great, and the Council teaches that it is universal: it is directed towards the whole Church, (39) and therefore it is of a missionary character. Normally, it is linked to the service of a particular community of the People of God, in which each individual expects attention, care and love. The heart of the priest, in order that it may be available for this service, must be free. Celibacy is a sign of a freedom that exists for the sake of service. According to this sign, the hierarchical or "ministerial" priesthood is, according to the tradition of our Church, more strictly "ordered" to the common priesthood of the faithful.

Test and Responsibility

The often widespread view that priestly celibacy in the Catholic Church is an institution imposed by law on those

who receive the sacrament of Orders is the result of a misunderstanding, if not downright bad faith. We all know that it is not so. Every Christian who receives the sacrament of Orders commits himself to celibacy with full awareness and freedom, after a training lasting a number of years, and after profound reflection and assiduous prayer. He decides upon a life of celibacy only after he has reached a firm conviction that Christ is giving him this "gift" for the good of the Church and the service of others. Only then does he commit himself to observe celibacy for his entire life. It is obvious that such a decision obliges not only by virtue of a law laid down by the Church but also by virtue of personal responsibility. It is a matter here of *keeping one's word to Christ and the Church*. Keeping one's word is, at one and the same time, a duty and a proof of the priest's inner maturity; it is the expression of his personal dignity. It is shown in all its clarity when this keeping one's promise to Christ, made through a conscious and free commitment to celibacy for the whole of one's life, encounters difficulties, is put to the test, or is exposed to temptation—all things that do not spare the Priest, any more than they spare any other Christian. At such a moment, the individual must seek support in more fervent prayer. Through prayer, he must find within himself that attitude of humility and sincerity before God and his own conscience; prayer is indeed the source of strength for sustaining what is wavering. Then it is that there is born a confidence like the confidence expressed by St. Paul in the words: "There is nothing that I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength". (40) These truths are confirmed by the experience of many Priests and proved by the reality of life. The acceptance of these truths constitutes the basis of fidelity to the promise made to Christ and the Church, and that promise is at the same time the proof of genuine fidelity to oneself, one's own conscience, and one's own humanity and dignity. One must think of all these things especially at moments of crisis, and not have recourse to a dispensation, understood as an "administrative intervention", as though in fact it were not, on the contrary, a matter of profound question of conscience and a test of humanity. God has a right to test each one

of us in this way, since this earthly life is a time of testing for every human being. But God also wishes us all to emerge victorious from such tests, and He gives us adequate help for this.

Perhaps, not without good reason, one should add at this point that the commitment to married fidelity, which derives from the sacrament of Matrimony, creates similar obligations in its own sphere; this married commitment sometimes becomes a source of similar trials and experiences for husbands and wives, who also have a way of proving the value of their love in these "trials by fire". Love, in fact, in all its dimensions, is not only a call but also a duty. Finally, we should add that our brothers and sisters joined by the marriage bond *have the right to expect from us, Priests and Pastors, good example and the witness of fidelity to one's vocation until death*, a fidelity to the vocation that we choose through the sacrament of Orders just as they choose it through the sacrament of Matrimony. Also in this sphere and in this sense we should understand our ministerial priesthood as "subordination" to the common priesthood of all the faithful, of the laity, especially of those who live in marriage and form a family. In this way, we serve in "building up the body of Christ"; (41) otherwise, instead of cooperating in the building up of that body we weaken its spiritual structure. Closely linked to this building up of the body of Christ is the authentic development of the human personality of each Christian—as also of each Priest—a development that takes place according to the measure of the gift of Christ. The disorganization of the spiritual structure of the Church certainly does not favor the development of the human personality and does not constitute its proper testing.

Every Day We Have to be Converted Anew

"What must we do, then?": (42) dear Brothers, this seems to be your question, just as the disciples and those who listened to Christ the Lord asked Him so often. What must the Church do, when it seems that there is a lack of priests, when their absence makes itself felt especially in certain countries and regions of the world? How are we to respond to the immense needs of evangelization,

and how can we satisfy the hunger for the Word and the Body of the Lord? The Church, which commits herself to maintaining priestly celibacy as a particular gift for the Kingdom of God, *professes faith in and expresses hope* in her Teacher, Redeemer and Spouse, and at the same time in Him who is "Lord of the harvest" and "giver of the gift". (43) In fact, "every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights". (44) We for our part cannot weaken this faith and confidence with our human doubting or our timidity.

In consequence, we must all be converted anew every day. We know that this is a fundamental exigency of the Gospel, addressed to everyone, (45) and all the more do we have to consider it as addressed to us. If we have the same in our own lives. Being converted means returning to the very grace of our vocation; it means meditating upon the infinite goodness and love of Christ, who has addressed each of us and, calling us by name, has said: "Follow me". Being converted means continually "giving an account" before the Lord of our hearts about our service, our zeal and our fidelity, for we are "Christ's servants, stewards entrusted with the mysteries of God". (46) Being converted also means "giving an account" of our negligences and sins, of our timidity, of our lack of faith and hope, of our thinking only "in a human way" and not "in a divine way". Let us recall, in this regard, the warning that Christ gave to Peter himself. (47) Being converted means, for us, seeking again the pardon and strength of God in the sacrament of Reconciliation, and thus always beginning anew, and every day progressing, overcoming ourselves, making spiritual conquests, giving cheerfully, for "God loves a cheerful giver". (48).

Being converted means "to pray continually and never lose heart". (49) *In a certain way prayer is the first and the last condition for conversion*, spiritual progress and holiness. Perhaps in these recent years — at least in certain quarters — there has been too much discussion about the priesthood, the priest's "identity", the value of his presence in the modern world, etc., and on the other hand there has been too little praying. There has not been enough enthusiasm for actuating the priesthood itself through prayer,

in order to confirm the priestly identity. It is prayer that shows the essential style of the priest; without prayer this style becomes deformed. Prayer helps us always to find the light that has led us since the beginning of our priestly vocation, and which never ceases to lead us, even though it seems at times to disappear in the darkness. Prayer enables us to be converted continually, to remain in a state of continuous reaching out to God, which is essential if we wish to lead others to Him. Prayer helps us to believe, to hope and to love, even when our human weakness hinders us.

Prayer likewise enables us continually to rediscover the dimensions of that Kingdom for whose coming we pray every day, when we repeat the words that Christ taught us. When we realize *what our place is in the realization of the petition*: "*Thy Kingdom come*", and we see how necessary we are in its realization. And perhaps, when we pray, we shall see more easily those "fields . . . already white for the harvest" (50) and we shall understand the meaning of Christ's words as He looked at them: "So ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers to His Harvest". (51)

We must link prayer with continuous work upon ourselves: this is the *formatio permanens*. As is rightly pointed out by the Document on this theme issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, (52) this formation must be both interior, that is to say directed towards the deepening of the priest's spiritual life, and must also be pastoral and intellectual (philosophical and theological). Therefore since our pastoral activity, the proclamation of the Word and the whole of the priestly ministry depend upon the intensity of our interior life, that activity must also find sustenance in assiduous study. It is not enough for us to stop at what we once learned in the seminary, even in cases where those studies were done at university level, which the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education resolutely recommends. This process of intellectual formation must last all one's life, especially in modern times, which are marked—at least in many parts of the world—by the widespread development of education and culture. To the people who enjoy the benefits of this development we must be *witnesses to Jesus Christ*, and properly qualified ones. As teachers of truth and morality, we must tell them,

convincingly, and effectively, of the hope that gives us life. (53) And this also forms part of the process of daily conversion to love, through the truth.

Dear Brothers: you who have borne "the burden of the day and the heat", (54) who have put your hand to the plough and do not turn back, (55) and perhaps even more those of you who are doubtful of the meaning of your vocation or of the value of your service: think of the places where people anxiously await a priest, and where for many years, feeling the lack of such a priest, they do not cease to hope for his presence. And sometimes it happens that they meet in an abandoned shrine, and place on the altar a stole which they still keep, and recite all the prayers of the Eucharistic liturgy; and then, at the moment that corresponds to the transubstantiation a deep silence comes down upon them, a silence sometimes broken by a sob . . . so ardently do they desire to hear the words that only the lips of a priest can efficaciously utter. So much do they desire Eucharistic Communion, in which they can share only through the ministry of a priest, just as they also so eagerly wait to hear the divine words of pardon: *Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis!* So deeply do they feel the absence of a priest among them! . . . Such places are not lacking in the world. So if one of you doubts the meaning of his priesthood, if he thinks it is "socially" fruitless or useless, reflect on this!

We must be converted every day, we must rediscover every day the gift obtained from Christ Himself in the sacrament of Orders, by penetrating the importance of the salvific mission of the Church and by reflecting on the great meaning of our vocation in the light of that mission.

Mother of Priests

Dear Brothers, at the beginning of my ministry I entrust all of you to the Mother of Christ, who in a special way is our Mother: the Mother of Priests. In fact, the beloved disciple, who, as one of the Twelve, had heard in the Upper Room the words "Do this in memory of me", (56) was given by Christ on the Cross to His Mother, with the words: "Behold your son". (57) The man who on Holy Thursday received the power to celebrate the Eucharist

was, by these words of the dying Redeemer, given to His Mother as her "son". All of us, therefore, who receive the same power through priestly Ordination have in a certain sense a prior right to see her as our Mother. And so I desire that all of you, together with me, should find in Mary the Mother of the priesthood which we have received from Christ. I also desire that you should entrust your priesthood to her in a special way. Allow me to do it myself, *entrusting to the Mother of Christ* each one of you—without any exception—in a solemn and at the same time simple and humble way. And I ask each of you, dear Brothers, to do it yourselves, in the way dictated to you by your own heart, especially by your love for Christ the Priest, and also by your own weakness, which goes hand in hand with your desire for service and holiness. I ask you to do this.

The Church of today speaks of herself especially in the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Genitum*. Here too, in the last chapter, she proclaims that she looks to Mary as to the Mother of Christ, because she calls herself a mother and wishes to be a mother, begetting people for God to a new life. (58) Now, dear Brothers: how near you are to the cause of God! How deeply it is imprinted upon your vocation, ministry and mission. In consequence, in the midst of the People of God, that looks to Mary with immense love and hope, you must look to her with exceptional hope and love. Indeed, you must proclaim Christ who is her Son; and who will better communicate to you the truth about Him than His Mother? You must nourish human hearts with Christ: and who can make you more aware of what you are doing than she who nourished Him? "Hail, true Body, born of the Virgin Mary". In our "ministerial" priesthood there *is the wonderful and penetrating dimension of nearness to the Mother of Christ*. So let us try to live in that dimension. If I may be permitted to speak here of my own experience, I will say to you that in writing to you I am referring especially to my own personal experience.

As I communicate all this to you, at the beginning of my service to the universal Church, I do not cease to ask God to fill you, Priests of Jesus Christ, with every blessing and grace, and as a token of this communion in prayer I bless

you with all my heart, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Accept this blessing. Accept the words of the new Successor of Peter, that Peter whom the Lord commanded: "And once you have recovered, you in your turn must strengthen your brothers". (59) Do not cease to pray for me together with the whole Church, so that I may respond to that exigency of a primacy of love that the Lord made the foundation of the mission of Peter, when He said to him: "Feed my lambs". (60) Amen.

From the Vatican, April 9th, Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday), in the year 1979, the first of the Pontificate.

Joannes Paulus PP. II

Footnotes

1. Cf. Mt. 20:12.
2. Cf. Jn. 21:15 ff.
3. *Vobis enim sum episcopus, vobiscum sum Christianus*: Serm. 340, 1: PL 38, 1483.
4. Cf. 1 art. 15.
5. *Epistula ad Magnesios*, VI, 1: *Patres Apostolici I*, ed. Funk, p. 235.
6. Cf. Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 12:31; 13.
7. Heb. 5:1.
8. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 10.
9. Heb. 5:1.
10. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 10.
11. Cf. Eph. 4:11-12.
12. Cf. 1 Pt. 2:5.
13. Cf. 1 Pt. 3:18.
14. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 10.
15. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 11.
16. Cf. Mt. 19:27.
17. Cf. Mt. 20:1-16.
18. Cf. Jn. 10:1-16.
19. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 11.
20. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 10.
21. Jn. 10:11.
22. Cf. 8:11, 19-20.
23. Mk. 8:35.
24. St. Gregory The Great, *Regula Pastoralis*, I, 1: PL 77, 14.
25. Cf. Heb. 5:1.
26. "Let us not deceive ourselves in thinking we serve the Gospel, if we try 'to dilute' our priestly charism...": Pope John Paul II, *Discourse to the Clergy of Rome* (Nov. 9th, 1978), no. 3; "L'Osservatore Romano" Nov. 10th, 1978, p. 2.
27. Cf. Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 38-39, 42.
28. 1 Cor. 2:9.
29. Jn. 10:12-13.
30. Jn. 10:10.
31. Cf. Jn. 17:12.
32. Mt. 19:12.
33. Cf. II Cor. 4:7.
34. Gen. 4:24; cf. Mt. 19:16.
35. Cf. Eph. 5:32.
36. Cf. 1 Cor. 1:7.
37. Mt. 19:12.
38. Cf. 1 Cor. 4:15; Gal. 4:19.

39. Cf. Decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 3, 6, 10, 12.
40. *Phil.* 4:13
41. *Eph.* 4:12.
42. *Lk.* 3:10.
43. *Mt.* 9:38; cf. *I Cor.* 7:7.
44. James 1:17.
45. Cf. *Mt.* 4:17; *Mk.* 1:15.
46. *I Cor.* 4:1.
47. Cf. *Mt.* 16:23.
48. *II Cor.* 9:7.
49. *Lk.* 18:1.
50. *Jn.* 4:35.
51. *Mt.* 9:38.
52. Cf. Circular Letter of Nov. 4th, 1969: *ASS* 62 (1970), pp. ff.
53. Cf. *I Pt.* 3:15
54. *Mt.* 20:12.
55. Cf. *Lk.* 9:62.
56. *Lk.* 22:19.
57. *Jn.* 19:26.
58. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter VIII.
59. *Lk.* 22:32.
60. *Jn.* 21:16.

ALL SAINTS DAY WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

Across the square
 Peeling planes
 Shed jewelled leaves
 And the zebra church
 (Sheltering her brood
 Of worshippers)
 Sits quietly
 In the concrete jungle.

With neat steps
 A velvet-voiced pigeon
 (With opals round her neck)
 Trips to Mass
 Nodding self-righteousness
 Murmuring introitos.

—Frank Rickards

How many Catholics are hurt—and hurt so cruelly and unnecessarily by their fellow religionists—within the Church today. J. C. L. Inman tells the story.

On Hurt in the Church Today

J. C. L. INMAN

OUR “renewed” Church has many “marks”, which are given greater or lesser emphasis according to one’s attitude and status. Words mean different things to different people. The picture of the modern Church is interpreted in widely different ways. Traditionalists and their sympathisers have difficulty in seeing what they believe to be disunity, confusion, hurt, ambiguity and losses portrayed as “The incalculable gains that have arisen from the reforms that have emerged as a result of the Council”. Progressives have difficulty in seeing what they believe to be a new, vibrant, caring ecclesiology described as “The disastrous slide into chaos that has occurred since the Council”. True communication has become very difficult, and bias makes it difficult to try to preserve a mind that is at least partly open. One “mark” that seems solid to me is the sheer volume of hurt that “renewal” has caused. This runs from top to bottom, from Right to Left; some of it is openly expressed and some of it is silently borne. Where suffering arises from external causes and forces, one hopes for fortitude to bear it and a closing of the ranks; but our suffering is internally generated, in the name, of all things, of a Pastoral Council.

The Agonising of a Pope and Cardinal

The agonising of Pope Paul was both public and private. Seemingly disobeyed by the Right, contemptuously disregarded and disobeyed by the Left, he remonstrated with all—and acted merely against the Right! He was blatantly deceived, vilified by many and used by some. How history

will judge him only time will tell. He avoided outright schism by refraining from condemnations, but he may well have bequeathed a far greater risk of schism to his successors, for, while disobedience is unfortunate, heterodoxy is devastating. Cardinal Heenan's book, *Crown of Thorns*, unequivocally put on the record his worries and pains over current events. The pastoral concern that led him to try to alleviate the hurt of some by obtaining the Indult, which gave the U.K. the opportunity of keeping the Immemorial Mass alive for the laity, "hurt" others. It infuriates Progressives, who "knew" that such keeping alive of hopes among those disenchanted with the Novus Ordo could only delay the eventual glad acceptance by those "silly", "reactionary" people, of this "meaningful" new Mass-form. In practice, while the Immemorial Mass has been kept alive licitly, the Indult has been extensively frustrated by some of the "knowing" bishops. More hurt all round !

Bishops are Hurt

Cardinal Hume has been quoted recently as being distressed by those who say they are bored by the New Mass or regret the changes that have been made in its celebration. As one who first knew him as Brother Basil, and has the greatest personal respect and affection for him, I am hurt to have to be a tiny contributor to his hurt, but I neither can nor believe I should shut off my critical faculties because of this fact. I won't lie in the cause of amity by saying that I both love and see the necessity for a Mass-form that experience has shown me to be immensely irritating, boring and a banal impoverishment of that which it has replaced. Catholics in any way perceptive, who meet bishops, or see them interviewed on television, hear them on the radio or carefully read their writings, can see that behind the careful, wary smiles and measured words they are hurt men, distressed by our internal disunity, worried by the lack of that solidarity in the Church, which their predecessors could take for granted. Today things may be "stimulating", "challenging", "hopeful" and "promising", but the bishops themselves are not united. The reason is that, instead of following bravely their own convictions, they take refuge in fudging "group solutions" drawn up at

their National Conference or Synod. I often feel that a replica of Harry Truman's desk plaque, which said "The buck stops here", should be an obligatory gift to every bishop on his consecration. Recently Archbishop John Murphy of Cardiff publicly beat his own breast for "His cowardice which will not oppose the prevailing wind". This candid statement was indeed a tonic: here was a bishop who was not beating the breasts of the defenceless laity for their less than adequate response to the products of the "genius" of the "expert" devisors of the prevailing wind; but the question remains. Will or will not His Grace actually do anything, or will he subordinate his own feelings and thoughts to prevent the rocking of a boat which at present would scarcely be rated A.I. at Lloyds? I have no means of knowing, but it seems likely that His Grace is an agonising man.

Priests are Hurt

Priests—yes, they are hurt, and sometimes they say so. Like bishops, they used to be able to take for granted the confidence in and respect for them of the great majority of their flocks. They may not always have been liked, but that's another matter. The reason for this near-automatic confidence and respect was that any lay person could ask any question of any priest and receive the same answer. It varied both in sensitivity of expression and in quality of detail, but it was the same answer. Both clergy and laity were a motley lot, as humanly varied then as they are today. The quality of practice varied greatly, as it does today, but there was a unity that is now sadly lacking. Today, a priest must earn, must win confidence in himself from an, in fact, disunited flock. It is a daunting task; it needs a talent and gifts that it is unreasonable to demand from all priests, and it is near miraculous how few, relatively, have cracked under the strain. And where do priests rate in the scheme of things? In effect, they are the N.C.O.s, who were no more consulted about "renewal" than were the helpless laity. They were as presumed upon as were the laity, not by the Fathers of the Council, but by the post-conciliar "experts", the smart alics and clever dicks whom my late father used to call "The blokes who believe, however

erroneously, that they know". The pastoral clergy were expected to attend briefings, shout "Yes, Sah" and go out unquestioningly and drill the troops. I certainly don't agree with global "priest-bashing", as do some of the writers of letters I receive. Alright, there are today the "crushers", or the smug rationalists, the "Managers of souls (Professional)", but there were in the Old Church. I well remember the odd coldly regal bishop, the curate-breaking P.P.'s, the ranting bigotry of others whose vocations seemed to have been thrust upon them, not by God but by parents who were determined to have a priest in the family. Purely apart from the fact that the only priests available are those we've got, all credit to them for sticking to their posts in difficult times, for surviving the demands that they constantly trim their sails to the fickle gusts of an ever-changing wind. Moreover, unless the present papal portents are being grossly misread, priests are shortly going to have to face up to a steady breeze, which may embarrass them, may, by its demands for a return to order, be far more likely to precipitate schism than ever did Archbishop Lefebvre. Face-saving formulae of words may be needed, and I for one hope that they will be provided by authority and accepted by the laity.

The Laity are Hurt

The laity. Do they have feelings, and if so do they really matter? Of course they do, even if I sometimes feel that "renewalists" of the blind obedience school of thought resemble the proverbial Victorian lady who, with her brood of children beside her, saw a labourer run over by a cart, and confidently assured them as he screamed that the lower orders did not feel pain for as long as the gently nurtured! The laity have suffered in all sorts of ways. The minority who protest make it known, but most remain mute, whether they lapse or plug away splendidly at their Mass attendance, their prayers and go on sending their children to Catholic schools. But to claim that these latter are all bird-happy with "renewal" is false, an attempt to propagandise, which in the end can only fool the propagandist. I have spoken to or been written to by far too many splendid souls who "feel something is missing at Mass

today". Far too many parents say "oh yes" when modern catechetics is "explained" to them by teachers, specialists or priests; but then have said to me that they don't really have a clue what it is all about. Far too many parents are agonising about the lapsation, or disinterest, or self-justification in sin of their young, all of which happenings are vastly more prevalent in practising families than in the "bad old days". And not all these families can be fobbed off with the excuse that all this is caused by contemporary hedonistic and atheistic society: I've heard all too often the cry "If only they'd give the kids something firm, something to hang their hats on, rather than all this clever stuff which doesn't mean anything to them".

Some of the young are hurt, even if it is only to the extent that they don't want to hurt their parents by saying "I don't believe; it means nothing at all to me". Another type of case that depended upon young "feeling" rather than "knowing" was the girl who said, "I don't like it since they took that thing (the tabernacle) off the altar. We don't go nowadays". What a splendid result of a formation in Catholic schools, from a practising background, in "renewed" times!

I don't know much about any real hurt among the progressive "thinkers". They certainly feel frustrated when their schemes suffer delays or checks; they are indignant when these are refused or submitted to examination. But they seem to be cold fish in the main; cleverly witty, maybe, but at heart humourless, possibly partially insulated from hurt by their certainty that they are right irrespective of any buffets they have to endure. I'm almost certainly being unfair, uncharitable: they are probably as hurt as everyone else, yet for different reasons. Yes, the hurt seems to go right across the board, and it's all internally generated.

Can the Hurt be Reduced

How can the hurt be reduced? I wish I knew. Reconciliation with the "Right" who, for all their seeming disobedience, are of unquestioned orthodoxy could and I believe will heal many senseless wounds; but I am quite aware that such reconciliation would make the *avant garde* scream blue murder even louder than they do at present.

The ecumaniacs would be cast down in the dumps. It would seem that there are few anaesthetics available; that if surgery is attempted, it will have to resemble that carried out on the field of Waterloo rather than in the heart-transplant unit at Papworth. But surgery can save people. There can be no excuse for not attempting it, for letting people "die" because of cowardice. The present Pope is certainly no coward, and his scalpel is poised above the heterodox. It's odd, when one thinks: they don't have to undergo surgery, provided they are willing to drink the medicine of orthodoxy. It's all so simple, really.

Independent Catholic grammar schools projected for east side of London, to start as soon as circumstances permit. If interested from any angle or in any capacity—as prospective parent, teacher, governor, financial backer, or simply as an interested person, please write c/o The Editor, *Christian Order*.

Publication of Father Crane's reflections on the National Pastoral Congress has been held up because *Christian Order* is not published in July and August. In fact, these notes were written within the fortnight that followed the conclusion of the Congress. What follows is not a detailed critique; rather a general impression that contains points of criticism.

CURRENT COMMENT

Reflections on the N.P.C.

THE EDITOR

I would be less than gracious if I set out to write these reflections on the National Pastoral Congress in any carping spirit. I have no intention of doing that. Neither am I able to present what might be called an insider's story, for the simple reason that I was not inside the Congress. I wasn't there. All I have to go on are some press reports; the final Sector reports, as published in the *Catholic Herald*, with commendable speed, on Friday, May 9th. some three days, I think I am right in saying, after the Congress broke up on Tuesday, May 6th. I have seen also the draft of what purports to be a Minority Report and which I found interesting. It made me wish I had been able to listen to some of the group discussions where views would have been exchanged and opinions expressed more freely than in the larger Sector gatherings.

Rather Startling

One thing I found rather startling right away. I was struck somewhat forcibly by the speed with which the Reports of the various Sectors (ratified, as I believe, by the whole Congress), with their well-written and compact style, were published in the *Catholic Herald*. I found myself asking the obvious question which, I imagine, any-

one might ask. How on earth could these Reports be turned out with such speed and in such well-written fashion sometime in the evening of the third of three hectic days (by my reckoning this would be Monday, May 5th)? So far as I could make out from my reading of the *Catholic Herald*, there were six Reports in all. I would have given them all a B+ for style and draftmanship alone; and that is no mean tribute. How on earth was this done, I asked myself, given the circumstances surrounding the drafting? Geniuses must have been at work? Or was it gremlins? Or was it either? I suddenly remembered that one of the Reports (which had all been published in the *Catholic Herald* for Friday, May 9th—less than four days after their drafting), had appeared in the *Times* for Tuesday, May 6th as “The Pastoral Congress’s Statement on Sex Teaching”. Here we go again! But never mind that. The significant thing to notice is the *Times* substitution of “statement” for “report”. For publication in the *Times* on the concluding morning of the Congress (Tuesday, May 6th), I don’t think, really, it could have been anything else. It would have required a super-genius and a considerable amount of money spent on postage, telex, telephone, telegram and/or personal messenger, for it to have been drawn up as a Report *after* the final deliberations of the Congress Sector on “Marriage and the Family” latish on Monday, May 5th; then, to be published in the *Times* for Tuesday, May 6th. I am led to the view, therefore, that the document concerning marriage and the family was a Statement and not a Report. The same would seem to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to its five companions. The evidence, admittedly circumstantial but reasonably strong, would appear to point in that direction.

Statement and Report

An interesting point emerges. A Report, indeed, is a Statement; but a Statement is not necessarily a Report. The latter conveys the *varied* opinions of, in this case, a Congress Sector (very large-sized group) met in discussion; it is drawn up subsequent to the discussion. The former can be and often is drawn up prior to the discussion and presented to the Sector gathering by way, I should say, of

a Manifesto. What it seeks is a general consensus, rather than a specific consent. It is, in this sense, less representative of prevailing opinion than a Report; the more so, if it is placed before any large group whose members are wearied after three days of hard discussion, with a great deal of outsize activity in between. What the Statement or Manifesto seeks and gets under these circumstances is a nod; and the nod is taken in the Press and Media as representative not merely of Sector, but of Congress Opinion. Thus Clifford Longley on the front page of the *Times* for May 6th, in his piece which introduced the "Report" on marriage and the family, had this headline to introduce what he said, "Roman Catholic Pastoral Congress Demands New Look at Sex Teaching". You see what I mean? Once this sort of ball starts rolling, you have no idea where it is going to stop. Havoc is created. False impressions are gathered right, left and centre. Chief among them, that Catholic participants at the Catholic Pastoral Congress at Liverpool — bishops, priests and religious as well as laity—rose like one man and demanded that the Church's teaching on contraception be repudiated. I am quite sure that this was not the case. I feel equally sure that quite a fair number of Congress delegates did favour the repudiation of that teaching; but this is not the point. It is that the impression of unanimity with regard to the repudiation of the Church's teaching on this matter should not have been conveyed in the first place.

The Contraceptive Lobby

Further, I am fairly sure that those who drafted the Congress Statement on "Marriage and the Family" were in the contraceptive lobby—in the same way I am sure that those who drafted the Statement calling for the affiliation of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to the World Council of Churches, were in favour of such affiliation themselves. There is nothing sinister here. I make no accusations of conspiracy. I simply state the near-inevitable; which is that, when this procedure of drafting Statements is followed, what might be called the prejudices—or, better, inclinations—of the drafters are bound to be imprinted, consciously or subconsciously on the Statement

or Draft. This is the perennial difficulty, "*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes*"? Who is to take care of those, who see it as their business to take care of us? No one, I imagine. This sort of trouble is endemic in the sort of procedure that characterized the Congress—outsized participation in three days of rushed discussion, under mainly progressive pressure, and with the need overall to produce what appear, at least, as results. The process is an impossible one. The only reasonable thing to do is to abandon that which is of such little value of its very nature because certain to produce unsatisfactory and sparse results. The procedure, of course, can be made to work through the exercise of Democratic Centralism, which means the manipulation of the majority by skilful and cohesive minority action. This is what I always thought we would have at the National Pastoral Congress. In the light of what evidence there is, I believe we did have it. We had to have it, as a matter of fact, if the outsized Congress was in any way to *be*. The in-men had to be there, for it to get through its business successfully. "There has been no evidence", wrote Clifford Longley in his *Times* piece noted above, "of a preconceived 'Catholic line' being imposed from above". Agreed. Certainly, not by the Bishops. They lost the habit of legitimate command years ago—in the immediate wake of Vatican II. Since then, they have cast their own role of indulgent uncles. They imposed no line at all at the Congress. In fact, if I am correct, the Congress line was not *imposed* by anyone. It was inserted understandably enough—within the "Reports"—no doubt with zeal and a measure of good intention by a middle-range group of "experts", clerical and lay.

The Pope has a Try

The Pope, of course, did have a try at imposing a line. In a filmed message sent to all the delegates on the Saturday morning (May 3rd) he stressed:

"In the community of the faithful—which must always maintain Catholic unity with the Bishops and the Apostolic See—there are great insights of faith.

"The Holy Spirit is active in enlightening the minds of the faithful with the truth, and in inflaming their

hearts with his love. But these insights of faith and this *sensus fidelium* are not independent of the *Magisterium* of the Church which is an instrument of the same Holy Spirit and is assisted by him. It is only when the faithful have been nourished by the word of God, faithfully transmitted in its purity and integrity, that their own charisms are fully operative and fruitful.

"Once the Word of God is faithfully proclaimed to the community and is accepted, it brings forth fruits of justice and holiness of life in abundance".

Which makes it all the more astonishing and, in my view, appalling that the call for a "Fundamental re-examination" of the Church's teaching on contraception should have been made at all at the Congress, for that teaching, as laid down by Pope Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae*, in accordance with Scripture and the traditional teaching of the Church on this subject, had only recently been vigorously and publicly upheld by the Holy Father before vast audiences in the Republic of Ireland and the United States. Yet, here was the Congress, with the Bishops of England and Wales, 300 priests and, no doubt, a good sprinkling of religious, flaunting in public the *Magisterium* of Teaching Authority of the Church which, only a few hours earlier, its supreme exponent on earth had called on them to uphold. There is no record as yet that a single one of them made any protest. Clifford Longley wrote in his article in the *Times* to which reference has been made already: "Bishops and clergy took part in the proceedings and Cardinal Hume listened to part of the discussion, which included forceful statements from lay (notice, please) Roman Catholics on both sides of the argument. Yesterdays resolutions will become an official part of the Congress's final document, which will be adopted formally today" (Tuesday, May 6th).

The Congress and the Magisterium

I cannot understand how the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster could let what amounts to open defiance, at least by implication, of the Holy Father and his Teaching Authority, pass without a word of protest. It will be said by some in defence of his silence that one central object

of the Congress was to allow the free and uninhibited expression of lay opinion. Moreover, its resolutions and/or recommendations would be placed before the Bishops of England and Wales for consideration at their Conference in July. How far the Congress resolutions would be allowed to go forward would thus rest with them. The final decision would be theirs. That is good, but the point still remains. It is this. At a Catholic Congress, though there should be, indeed, plenty of discussion, one has every right to expect that it be set within the guide-lines laid down by the obligation all Catholics are under of adhering to those articles of doctrinal belief upheld by the Teaching Authority of the Church. The free expression of opinion is not an end in itself. It must bow to truth; in the case of a Catholic this means, in particular, that body of truth upheld by the Church's Teaching Authority. This would appear to apply particularly to Catholic delegates attending a National Catholic Pastoral Congress. Either they accept the Teaching Authority of the Church or they do not. If they do, well and good. If they do not, they should not be there; if, nevertheless, they are there and manifest publicly their small regard (to put it mildly) for the Church's Teaching Authority, they should be called to order, particularly by those responsible for upholding it in season and out of season; viz. the Bishops of the Church (in this case of England and Wales, most, if not all, of whom were present at the Liverpool Congress). The fact that the bishops at the Congress failed to call to order those who openly expressed their disregard for the Church's Teaching Authority is not to the credit of the Hierarchy of England and Wales; neither has it improved their credibility where the great bulk of the faithful are concerned. Quite apart from this and, in the light of the recorded defiance of the *Magisterium* at the Congress, one is entitled to ask how many delegates, though silent, were mentally in disregard of the *Magisterium*; and to ask further, if the majority were so minded, what worth is to be attached to the deliberations of the Congress itself. After all and *a pari*, one would not rate very high the conclusions of a conference charged with investigating the morale of a country's armed forces, if the bulk of its members

were pacifist at heart. The same reasoning would seem to apply to the National Pastoral Congress.

Euphoria on the Steering Committee

But the case is not merely one of delegates on the floor at Liverpool. The penultimate paragraph of Clifford Longley's front-page article in the *Times* for May 6th and to which reference has several times been made, is extremely illuminating. It should be remembered that the article was concerned with the resolutions put forward by that Sector of the Congress concerned with marriage and the family, one of which called for a "fundamental re-examination" of the Church's teaching with regard to contraception. Here is Longley's paragraph:

"Several members of the steering committee said last night that they felt euphoric. And a leading priest said that he had despaired of the renewal started by the Second Vatican Council coming to England until he felt the atmosphere at the Congress".

I presume that the steering committee referred to is that of the entire Congress. We are entitled to conclude legitimately from what Longley says that several of its members told him in the light of the resolutions and recommendations of the Sector concerned with Marriage and the Family that they felt euphoric. There may well have been others who felt the same, but did not say so. What made them euphoric was a series of resolutions, including several calling into question the Church's teaching with regard to contraception, the remarriage of divorced couples and their admission to the Sacraments; all of which implied a disregard for the Teaching Authority of the Church on which the Holy Father—the supreme recipient of that Authority—had laid stress in a filmed message given to themselves and all Congress delegates a day or so before. From which we are entitled to conclude to the likelihood that not merely a majority of Congress delegates, but, at the very least, a sizeable few of those who composed its Steering Committee were in disregard of the Magisterium of the Church and in a position through adroit steering, to give that disregard open and public expression, particularly in the matter of the Church's teaching with regard to marriage and the family and its accompanying problems.

Conspiratio not Conspiracy

Let me make it very clear, at this point, that I am not impugning the integrity of these members of the Steering Committee. Neither am I charging them with conspiracy. I am merely pointing to the obvious when I say that where you have a group of like-minded people on a Steering Committee, there will be a *conspiratio*—a breathing together—which unites them and causes them to steer a congress or conference, however subconsciously, in their chosen direction. In this sense, it might well be fair to say that the National Pastoral Congress at Liverpool was manipulated. What you had there was an exercise in Democratic Centralism, the kind of operation you get so often where Progressives are in charge, particularly of the new bureaucracies, in various areas of activity and administration in the Church today; the voice of the bureaucratic “expert” shrouding that of true Authority at all points until a stage is reached where, as in the case of so many Bishops, the only course open is withdrawal into semi-retirement or abdication. It is precisely because Pope John Paul refuses such withdrawal, to content himself with the part of benevolent uncle; but asserts over and over again his Authority in upholding the Magisterium, that they—the clerical bureaucrats and “experts”—are turning increasingly against him. He will have to get rid of them, along with a good many avuncular Bishops already in their grip, if the exercise of his authority is to prove effective and the work of restoration be effectively begun.

Renewal and Rootless Change

A further point is worth noting in Longley’s penultimate paragraph. He writes of “a leading priest”—on the Steering Committee of the Congress or not, I do not know—who said that he had despaired of the renewal set in train by Vatican II until he felt the atmosphere at the Congress. Which can only mean from the context within which this priest’s recorded remark was set, that he regarded renewal, as have so many clerics and religious, as release from restraints in aid of the Supernatural and which are set round the life of the Catholic Christian on this earth with that end in view. This leading priest was in favour, pre-

sumably, where the traditional teaching of the Church with regard to marriage and the family was concerned, of Congress resolutions supporting not merely development, but "change and development" (as Longley notes in his *Times* article) with regard to that teaching in the matter of contraception, the admission of divorcees to the Sacraments and their remarriage. This, for him, appeared to constitute renewal as preached by Vatican II — release from restraint, which means relapse into the secular and leads on into the totally false identification of renewal with rootless change. This view, of course, is completely false. It is nowhere to be found in the Second Vatican Council. Its origins are in the secularism of many of the *periti* at that Council and their friends in the Media, who spread the message that renewal spelt release from the strictures of old-time stringencies; that secularised ordinarieness was to be the "happy" lot of the Faithful in future. Henceforth, they were to be as other men, not only on account of the good it would do them, but as an aid to the "New Ecumenism".

In fact, the exact opposite was the case. The call of Vatican II—endorsed magnificently by the Latin American Bishops at Puebla—was that Catholics should not be as other men; conscious — in no way arrogantly, but in truly humble thankfulness — of the New Life shared in love with Christ, which Baptism brought to them, sharing that life of love with those possessed of it, extending it to others. For this, what the Greeks called *metanoia*—profound inner conversion, a gripping through prayer of Christ as the basic reality of one's life as a Christian—was called for. This is the only foundation of true renewal. The type of rootless change, which passes so superficially for it in so many clerical and religious circles today, has as close a relationship to true renewal as garbage to gold. We can be very thankful that this correct concept of true renewal was evidenced in the reports and statements of some of the Congress Sectors, particularly the two dealing with ministry, vocation and the apostolate and Christian formation. It was there in these Reports, but, so far as I can judge, it secured no general predominance. The general tone of the Congress, so far as I can gather, was in the

direction of identifying renewal with rootless change. There appears to have been at the Congress a notable absence of depth; an almost wanton unawareness of the significance of Grace—life shared in love with Christ—as the key to the whole.

Renewal and the N.P.C.

I have the feeling—it is no more than that and you may discard what I say now if you wish to—that this wrong concept of renewal in terms of exterior change, as distinct from that prayerful inner realization of what it means to share life with Christ, is more marked in the case of progressive priests and religious than it is in that of laity. My reason for saying so is simple. It is precisely the progressive priests and religious who have called so loudly for exterior change in the past and continue to do so in the present. And my fear is that, if yet more commissions and committees are going to come out of this National Pastoral Congress, they will be staffed by Progressives, who have shown once again at the National Pastoral Congress that they are in disregard of the Teaching Authority of the Church and unacquainted with the essence of true renewal. Neither of these grossly minus factors will prevent their appointment to these varied posts. If the Bishops failed to protest when they showed themselves in disregard of the Magisterium at the Congress, why should they not yield to the pressure that will be mounted undoubtedly for their appointment to the Commission and Committees that will be set up in its wake? This, apart from the fact that many of them are firmly entrenched already in existing pastoral and catechetical centres, commissions, committees and so forth—to the very considerable detriment of the Faithful and the Faith. Taking a few more newly formed commissions under their progressive wing and “in the spirit of Vatican II” will mean absolutely nothing at all to them.

What makes me tremble most of all, of course, is that, if the call for courses (Understood, I rather think, as compulsory) for in-service training for clergy and religious bears fruit and the in-service training centres are placed in progressive hands, as they are most likely to be, then

any fruit the courses bear will be of the Dead Sea variety. Nothing could be better calculated than an arrangement of this sort to give the Church in this country the most massive set-back it has had in years. To consign its future to the mercies of a Progressive Clerical Bureaucracy, to a greater extent even than is now the case, would be to kill it. Half-strangled as it already is, this, I think, would prove its death-knell. I sincerely hope that any attempt in this direction will be stopped in its tracks by episcopal firmness, if any vestige of it still exists.

Advice to be Followed

The best advice to follow in any course of future action is that of the Archbishop of Cardiff. It was given in a Pastoral Letter published just before the Congress. In it the Archbishop said that the main reason for going to the Congress should not be to "clamour for new structures, more changes of laws that can't be changed because they are not our laws but God's, more resolutions, more surveys"; instead each person should go determined on his own personal renewal. "Then", the Archbishop continued, "By the Grace of God, we will all catch the spark, and the renewal envisaged by Vatican II will be accomplished". These words are as simple to say as they are difficult to put into practice. What needs to be remembered, however, is that the longer we wait to start the real work of renewal, the harder it will prove, when the starting-time is finally thrust upon us, to start at all. The Bishops, I trust will make a note of that.

MODERNIST ANTHEM

O how ridiculous,
Is our predicament:
What can we do?
We've brought 'em up on lies,
And now to our surprise,
They've penetrated the disguise;
What *can* we do?

—S. G.

The Author of this open letter is a teacher and writer, an art historian, a professional artist and Royal Academy exhibitor, a Doctor of Philosophy and, as he writes most charmingly, a husband and father of long standing. His letter merits close attention.

Letter from a Layman

ANTHONY HOBSON

I WAS a "born Catholic", member of a Church whose antiquity was evidence of its authority. The Mass was the centre of the Faith, the Eucharist was the centre of the Mass. So it was logical that one should go to Mass every Sunday, and that this should be a Precept of the Church—"to hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation".

But now I belong to a Church which is so unsure of itself that it wishes nothing more than to look like other Churches. The liturgy—that physical act by which (and only by which) man can give public evidence of his spiritual debt to God—has been changed in such a manner as to provide positive proof of that uncertainty. It was only because of the supernatural element in the Mass, of which the physical manifestations transcended acts of private prayer, that our attendance could rightly be demanded at this unique ceremony.

But now the Church's uncertainty is communicated to the faithful, and they must be more faithful than their pastors to withstand the onslaught of disbelief because what they are called upon to do, or *not* to do, at Mass is the physical evidence of faith in the supernatural. The signs of reverence used everywhere in the world are the same: to lower oneself in humility, to kneel, even before an earthly Sovereign. But now one is not merely discouraged but positively prevented from making such reverential signs. During the Creed (which used to be the Credo: the personal, individual "I believe") each of us would kneel in reverence at the mention of the Incarnation, the great mystery which accompanied our Redemption. Now it is

considered more important to shake hands with our neighbour : but how can any intelligent person take that comparison seriously ? And at the moment which for any human soul must be the supreme experience, however often repeated—the reception of God Himself into ourselves in Holy Communion—the opportunity for reverence, for a few moments' detachment from the world, is proscribed as the faithful shuffle standing in their queue.

The sanctity of the Host, signified by the joined fingers of the priest once having touched the sacred element, is degraded as all and sundry are encouraged to do the same with minimal formality—and for what reason ? The words *Corpus Christi*, so full of meaning because outside everyday parlance, are no longer heard, in spite of the earlier provision for them. There is in fact no hint that to name this daily miracle demands a special language—that language which the accidents of history have delivered to us safe and sound : a language firmly based in a remarkable culture, prized as a vehicle for declamation, so constructed as to be a disciplinary exercise as well as a model and an ingredient of later forms of speech and writing, and yet not debased by current use. The word “Body” is blared at us from press and poster, linked always with the most obvious, least spiritual areas of human gratification—the shape of a girl, the consistency of beer. The marketing of a beer called “Corpus Christi” would no doubt lead to a public outcry of blasphemy and the substitution of another trademark, but the reverse process has apparently little effect on the bovine Catholic or on his wilfully ignorant masters. There are always excuses : the pace of modern life demands that communicants keep moving : ancient practices discarded for good reason suddenly justify communion-in-the-hand. The rush and bustle of today leave no time for the marvellous comfort of those words to each communicant : *Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam tuam in vitam aeternam*—the individual ceremony within a ceremony to accompany the experience surpassing all other experiences.

This is what knocks the ground from under the feet of the ordinary Catholic whose Sunday observance, God help him, is almost the sum of his practice of religion. If those

who administer the Sacrament can reduce *their* recognition of its awe-inspiring mystery in every kind of human terms, how can *he* be expected to think any more of it? "Lip-service" is a contemporary term for something of little worth: but it *is* a service, it does take an effort, and when accompanied by thought it takes its place as one of the arts given by God to man in order to please them both.

The value of the small things and actions called sacramentals used to be fully recognised by frequent use. The genuflection and the sign of the cross marked the individual's motion towards the Creator. But now the acceptable motions are socialist (there is no other word), the emphasis not on bowing and scraping to a superior being but on the manly handshake with a comrade, the "We believe" of the group instead of the individual commitment. If you wish to follow this line of reasoning to its ultimate conclusion, then consider the menacing face of world politics since we stopped praying for the conversion of Russia at the end of each Mass. And it really is no good to point out that this or that phrase or practice was common in the second or third century. If this is our logic then history has no lessons for us, any form of progress is not worth striving for, the natural ability of intelligent man to refine and harmonise those things which fall to his hand is of no account and the intuitive beauty expressed in art, the uplifting force of poetry and even the innate sensibility of manners between men and women are all part of a cruel joke.

Increasingly, it may seem to the observer that a facade exists behind which decisions are still made in the same closed circles which once enjoyed a simple trust; a pretended democracy in which laymen are made to appear more active but have less say than ever. There is a sham Anglicanism embodied in the liturgy, surrendering outward pretence to a Roman Catholicism and papering over the cracks with hymns and incense while reserving impregnable positions on issues of public concern. There is the assumption that most Catholics are so ignorant and obtuse that even if not taught classics in school they can peruse the same brief passages of Latin *and* English together in their Missals at least sixty times in every year of their lives

and never understand their meaning. This is so insulting as to be intolerable; it robs us of any need for education but takes away all respect for those who should be elevating our minds instead of levelling them.

The Church in England is not necessarily being governed by idiots, but by people who think (or wish) the laity to be idiots. This may well not include bishops, whose function might sometimes appear to be simply one of permitting novelties and refusing established rights. God knows that the faithful need help, understanding and a degree of flexibility in answering the proper demands made upon them. God knows too that they need to make some effort themselves, and that this effort is like the training of the athlete: it is in itself unimportant except in so far as it leads to and makes possible the attainment of the higher goal. Why, otherwise, should we speak of spiritual "exercises"? They understand this in the Army, in the best schools, in the practice of the arts and crafts. Simple tasks with a right direction, when well performed, provide an intrinsic satisfaction as well as the desired result. One must reach through the physical to the divine, otherwise penance and the fear of hell would have no meaning or sense. God is no doubt infinitely subtle, but then as He embodies all good qualities to the utmost degree, He surely also embodies the ultimate in common sense.

So where do we stand in the practice of our religion? It seems to me that we had it all in our hands: the unfolding of tradition over centuries, a process which cannot be hurried: the care for works of art which should never be destroyed, even if new works should be made to place beside them: the sensible refining of practices which could thereby become steadily more dignified and worthy of their object, the sanctification of the individual: the attunement of life to new discoveries and the acceptance of goodwill as part of the aspiring nature of man: the spirit of the confessional at its best rather than of the edict at its most repressive. We had the opportunity to stress the unlimited joys of marriage rather than the opportunities for guilt within as well as without it; and by hedging about the true licence given to the couple by the sacrament we made laughable any proper censure of extramarital love. With

an identical reaction to different words, we continually condemned both contraception and abortion in the same breath, when a few minutes' thought would have shown them to be almost totally different in kind, in circumstances and in motivation. This was the same mentality which through the weekly printed circular informed a congregation, some of whom had been travelling forty and fifty miles each Sunday in order to hear Mass in the old Rite, that they need not come unless they agreed with the Church's official teaching on contraception. We refuted the concept of situational ethics, but continued to condone killing in a just war. We confused essentials and non-essentials and divided the Church neatly down the middle.

We hastily confessed ourselves to be wrong—at least in some minor matters—instead of admitting others might be right in some respects. We changed the liturgy to suit the Anglicans, retaining the harshest provisions of the law for our own people, to whom we ostentatiously presented the largely unwanted and wholly unneeded freedoms of folk Masses and primary school texts while refusing them the dignity of the Tridentine Mass and in so doing breaking the firm promise of its ever-enduring validity. Such double standards are difficult to acknowledge in someone we love.

We had it all and we blew it. We overdid it. The Mass is at the centre of things for all Catholics. It is like the shield in a display of heraldry: it bears the definitive devices, and without it all the remainder—crest, helm, motto, supporters—have no meaning. Alter that centrepiece and the alteration is fundamental. Knowing (didn't we ?) about the difference between shadow and substance, we made all the wrong decisions, with an incontrovertible kind of opacity and a total lack of common sense. Because the Mass was largely inaudible we averred that it must be unintelligible: therefore, instead of simply having it spoken out loud, we threw out poetry, which demands a little effort but elevates the spirit through man's genius, and substituted a basic English which for the most part is not even memorable let alone likely to spring to mind in the dark moments of the soul.

At a time when everybody in the civilised world was indisputably better educated than ever before in history;

when foreign travel was more widespread than anybody could possibly have envisaged fifty years previously and a universal language consequently more necessary and appropriate than ever, we pronounced that none were capable of properly understanding any tongue but their own and put all liturgies into the vernacular. At one stroke the Church severed the link which drew all nations together before its altars, through which we could go into a Catholic church anywhere in the world and hear Mass in complete unity with our fellow-Catholics. This is a form of suicide, an utter meaningless hara-kiri, for which arguments which could have been advanced have totally vanished. More than anything, it has destroyed the Catholic trust in the intellectual judgement of the hierarchy: if they can be wrong in such simple matters, how can we rely upon them for the rest?

We are only poor sinners, after all, and can but recognise the tree by its leaves and fruits. Once, in our simple way, we were rather proud to belong to the best club in the world, and tried to make up for it by wanting everyone else to join too. Now perhaps we might just as well adopt the slightly easier yoke of the Anglicans. They really look very much like ourselves, but what is more, they still have nearly all the best churches and indeed a lot of the best tunes.

NOSTALGIA

So we are "suffering from nostalgia"?
Perhaps we are, while you remain unmoved.
Perhaps the difference between us is
You never cared. We loved.

—S. G.

Canticle of the Sun

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Most high, all-powerful, all good, Lord!

All praise is Yours, all glory, all honor
and all blessing.

To You, alone, Most High, do they belong—
no mortal lips are worthy
to pronounce Your name.

All praise be Yours, my Lord, through all that
You have made
and first my lord Brother Sun,
who brings the day;
and light You give to us through him.

How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor!
Of You, Most High, he bears the purest likeness.

All praise be Yours, My Lord,
through Sisters Moon and Stars;
in the heavens You have made them,
bright and precious and fair.

All praise be Yours, my Lord,
through Brothers Wind and Air,
and fair and stormy, all the weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.

All praise be Yours, my Lord,
through Sister Water,
so useful, lovely, precious and pure.

All praise be Yours, my Lord,
through Brother Fire,
through whom You brighten up the night.
How beautiful is he, how gay! Full of power and strength.

All praise be Yours, my Lord,
through Sister Earth, our mother,
who feeds us in her sovereignty and produces
various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.

All praise be Yours, my Lord,
through those who grant pardon for love of You;
through those who endure sickness and trial.

Happy those who endure in peace;
by You, Most High, they will be crowned.

All praise be Yours, my Lord,
through Sister Death,
from whose embrace no mortal can escape.

Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Happy those she finds doing your will!
The second death can do no harm to them.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks,
and serve Him with great humility.

Part Two of the Joint Pastoral of the late Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador and Bishop Arturo Damas of Santiago de Maria, now Administrator of the Archdiocese of San Salvador, considers the relationship between the Church and the Popular or People's Organizations of San Salvador. This includes an important section on the role of the struggle for liberation in Christian Salvation.

Readers are reminded that copies of this Joint Pastoral are obtainable from the Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1, Cambridge Terrace, London NW1 4JL, United Kingdom at the price of 25p per copy plus postage. We are indebted to the CIIR for permission to reproduce the Joint Pastoral in *Christian Order*

The Church, Political Organization and Violence

2: THE CHURCH AND 'POPULAR ORGANISATIONS'

A New Problem

OUR subject here is not the attitude of the Church to the different political parties, since that has already been examined and is well known. The issue is how the Church should see and perform its particular mission within the process of organisation which is now taking place at such speed among the people, primarily among the peasants. It might well be thought that this proliferation of 'popular organisations' is for us one of the "signs of the times" which challenge the Church to exercise its power and duty of discernment and guidance in the light of the word of God which has been given to it to be applied to the problems of history.

We have already said that there is a new challenge here, not only for the Church, but also for the organisations themselves and society in general. Therefore common reflection, with the help of the Holy Spirit and in communion with the responsible bishops, as recommended in the passage quoted above from Paul VI's *Octagesimo Adveniens*, will be a sure path to understanding and to keeping an evangelical balance between the identity and duty of the Church and the social and political concerns of the people.

We will first make three statements of principle and then apply them to our situation.

THREE STATEMENTS OF PRINCIPLE

We can consider the relationship of the Church to 'popular organisations' at two different levels, practical and theoretical.

At the practical level, much depends on the actual historical situation. That is to say, when the Church has to make judgements or to advise people looking for guidance based on the Gospel about immediate political commitments, the Church must study each situation from a pastoral point of view, show respect for the rightful plurality of solutions, and not identify itself with any one of them, since the Church has to respect the freedom to make specific political choices.

At the theoretical level, in regard to the relationship between the Church and any organisation which has as its objectives social and political justice, we want to lay down three principles.

1. *The Church's own nature*

The first principle we take as it stands from the Second Vatican Council: "Christ, to be sure, gave his Church no proper mission in the political, economic or social order. The purpose which he set before her is a religious one. But out of this religious mission itself comes a function, a light and an energy which can serve to structure and consolidate the human community according to the divine law" (*Gaudium et spes*, 42).

These more religious aspects of the mystery of the Church can be studied in the Archbishop of San Salvador's first two letters. They are not the main subject of this one, although we have them very much in mind in order to maintain the true nature and mission of the Church in its relationship with other human organisations.

In his exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI described the two chief religious bonds which give cohesion and its own particular style to the Church's community: "Those who sincerely accept the Good News, through the power of this acceptance and of shared faith, therefore gather together in Jesus' name in order to seek together the Kingdom, build it up and live it. They make up a community which, in its turn evangelizes . . . This acceptance, which cannot remain abstract and disembodied, reveals itself practically by a visible entry into a community of believers. Thus those whose life has been transformed enter a community which is itself a sign of transformation, a sign of newness of life: it is the Church, the visible sacrament of salvation. But entry into the ecclesial community will in its turn be expressed through many other signs which prolong and unfold the sign of the Church. In the movement of evangelization, a person who accepts the Gospel as the Word which saves normally translates it into the following sacramental acts: becoming a member of the Church and receiving the Sacraments, which demonstrate and support this membership through the grace which they confer" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 13 and 23).

Thus, one must not lose sight of this specific task of the Church: evangelism. The Word of God creates a Church community united in itself and with God by means of sacramental signs, chief of which is the Eucharist. This is why the Council said, "By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament of intimate union with God and of the unity of all mankind" (*Lumen Gentium*, 1).

However, on accepting this Word of God, people find that it is a living Word which brings awareness and demands. That is to say, it makes them aware of what sin and grace are and of what must be fought and what must be built on earth. It is a Word that demands of our con-

sciences and of our lives not only that we judge the world by the criteria of the Kingdom of God but that we act accordingly. It is a Word of God which we must not only hear but put into practice.

This is what the Church has been doing in its pastoral work : gathering men around the Word of God and the Eucharist. We cannot give up the right to do this. It is a duty demanded of us by the very nature of the Church. To this level of pastoral work belong our attempts to set up and encourage basic ecclesial communities. These are the organised communities which arise around the Word of God, a Word which brings men together, makes them aware, and makes demands upon them, and around the Eucharist and the other sacramental signs to celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, celebrating at the same time our human effort to open ourselves to the gift of a greater humanity. Of these basic ecclesial communities Paul VI said "they spring from the need to live the life of the Church ever more intensely, or from the desire and search for a human dimension which it is hard for larger ecclesial communities to offer . . . These communities are places of evangelization, for the benefit of larger communities, especially the local Churches, and a hope for the universal Church" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 58). These communities have to be maintained and strengthened because they are the vital cells of the Church. They embody the whole concept of the Church and its unique mission. The pastors and the helpers must take care that this identity and mission be maintained in all its purity and autonomy so that they are not confused with other organisations and, above all, are not manipulated by them. That is why it is very proper that pastors and others engaged in pastoral work should keep in mind the comments of Paul VI and the other bishops at the 1974 Synod when they pointed to the dangers which were likely to turn these communities aside from their ecclesial nature and the evangelical objectives. We want to draw particular attention, in line with our theme, to the warning "not to let themselves be ensnared by political polarization of fashionable ideologies which are only too ready to exploit their immense human potential" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 58).

The Church is also fully aware, through its own experience, that the typical ecclesial community can also arouse in Christians an explicitly political vocation. We have said that the Word of God, which nourishes the ecclesial community, is a Word which makes people aware and makes demands upon them and that this Word must not only be heard but also put into practice. This demand and action in response to it can awaken in a Christian political commitment. Moreover, the Council itself recommended that "Civil and personal education is today supremely necessary for the people, especially young people. Such education should be painstakingly provided, so that all citizens can make their contribution to the political community. Let those who are suited for it, or can become so, prepare themselves for the difficult but most honourable art of politics. Let them work to exercise this art without thought of personal convenience and bribery". (*Gaudium et Spes*, 75).

However, when political vocations appear in the ecclesial community, the Church has no special role in determining the specific means to be chosen to achieve a more just society. While respecting the autonomy of politics, it will continue to maintain its own properly ecclesial character as outlined above.

2. *The Church at the service of the people*

The second principle which we must lay down is that the Church has a mission of service to the people. Precisely from its specifically religious character and mission "come a function, a light, and an energy which can serve to structure and consolidate the human community according to the divine law" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 42).

It is the role of the Church to gather into itself all that is human in the people's cause and struggle, above all in the cause of the poor. The Church identifies with the poor when they demand their legitimate rights. In our country the right they are demanding is hardly more than the right to survive, to escape from misery.

This solidarity with just aims is not restricted to particular organisations. Whether they call themselves Christian or not, whether they are protected by the government,

legally or in practice, or whether they are independent of it and opposed to it, the Church is only interested in one thing: if the aim of the struggle is just the Church will support it with all the power of the Gospel. In the same way it will denounce, with genuine impartiality, all injustice in any organisation, wherever it is found. By virtue of this service which it is the Church's duty to render, through its faith, to men's thirst for justice, it was stated at Medellin that the direction to be taken by pastoral policy in Latin America was "to encourage and to favour all those forces among the people which are seeking to create and develop their own basic organisations to win back and to consolidate their rights, and to search for a true justice" (Medellin, *Peace*, 27).

The Church is well aware of the complexity of political action. However, and we repeat, it is not, nor ought it to be, an expert in this sort of action. Nevertheless it can and must pass judgement on the general intention and the particular methods of the parties and organisations precisely because of its interest in a more just society—the economic, social, political and cultural hopes of men are not alien to the definitive liberation achieved in Jesus Christ, which is the transcendent hope of the Church (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 29-36).

No less can the Church shirk the task of defending the weak and those in real need, whatever the nature of the groups or individuals who support these just causes.

As Paul VI remarked "the language used at the 1974 Synod by bishops from every continent is well known. Their pastoral concern echoed the voices of millions of sons and daughters of the Church who make up such peoples. These peoples, as we know, are engaged with all their energies in the effort and struggle to overcome everything that condemns them to remain on the edge of life: famines, chronic diseases, illiteracy, pauperisation, injustice in international relations and especially in commercial transactions, situations of economic and cultural neocolonialism, which at times is just as cruel as the political kind. The Church, the bishops repeated, has the duty to proclaim the liberation of millions of human beings—many of whom are her children—the duty to assist at the birth of this

liberation, to bear witness to it, to ensure that it is complete. None of this is unconnected with evangelisation" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 30).

In this service of solidarity with the just causes of the poor, we have not forgotten the duties of the poor themselves and the demands on them to show respect for others. When we have mediated in conflicts, when we have denounced attacks on dignity, life or liberty, and on other occasions when we have shown this solidarity, we have always tried to be just and objective, and we have never been moved by, nor have we ever preached, hatred or resentment. On the contrary, we have called for conversion. We have pointed to justice as the indispensable basis of that peace which is the true objective of Christians. Amongst its services to the people the Church included countless works of charity for the welfare and Christian education of the poor, works which give the lie to those who accuse the church of only agitating and never acting.

3. *The role of the struggle for liberation in Christian salvation*

This is the third principle which, at the theoretical level, guides our reflection on relations between the Church and 'popular organisations'. These organisations are forces for the achievement of social, economic and political justice among the people, especially among the peasants. The Church, as we have said, fosters and encourages just attempts at organisation and supports whatever is just in their demands. The Church's service to these legitimate efforts for liberation would not however be complete if it did not bring to bear on them the light of its faith and its hope and point out their place in the overall plan of the salvation brought by our Redeemer Jesus Christ.

The overall plan of the liberation proclaimed by the Church:

- a) involves the whole man, in all his dimensions, including his openness to the absolute which is God. To that extent it is linked to a certain understanding of man—an understanding which cannot be sacrificed to the demands of any particular strategy, tactic, or short-term expedient;
- b) is centred on the Kingdom of God and, while its mission

is not limited to religion, it nevertheless "reaffirms the primacy of man's spiritual vocation" and proclaims salvation in Jesus Christ;

c) proceeds from a scriptural vision of man, is based on a deep desire for justice in love, implies a truly spiritual dimension which has as its final aim salvation and happiness with God;

d) demands a conversion of heart and mind and is not satisfied with merely structural changes;

e) and excludes violence, considering it "unchristian and unscriptural", ineffective and out of keeping with the dignity of the people (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 33-37).

If the Church, in its support for any group in its efforts to achieve liberation in this world, were to lose the overall perspective of Christian salvation "It would lose its deepest meaning. Its message of liberation would no longer have any originality and would easily be open to exploitation and manipulation . . . It would lose its authority to proclaim freedom in the name of God" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 32).

On the other hand, by cultivating in men's hearts faith and hope in this overall plan of Christ's salvation, the Church preaches the real reasons for living, it puts forward the most solid grounds possible to help people become aware of themselves as truly free and ready to work with serene confidence for the liberation of the world. Acting in this way the Church "is trying more and more to encourage large numbers of Christians to devote themselves to the liberation of others. She is providing these Christian 'liberators' with the inspiration of faith, and motivation of fraternal love, a social teaching which the true Christian must not only not ignore but which he must make the foundation of his prudence and of his experience in order to translate it practically into forms of action, participation and commitment" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 38).

The Charisma of Paul VI

To end this statement of principles which should help us to understand more readily the relationship that should exist between the Church and organisations working for social justice, our thoughts turn once more in grateful reverence to the memory of Pope Paul VI. We give thanks

for the charismatic clarity of his teaching and for the pastor's love he showed for us, the people of El Salvador.

He had a remarkable ability to explain the theology of the Church's relationship with the world and his teaching has clarified our own reflections. It has led us forward, guiding us by means of many documents on social and ecclesiological questions. We invite the whole community of our dioceses to join us in our reflections so that our teaching, commitment and action in this delicate area may be more precise.

The pastoral love which the Pope enjoined on us as his last wish for El Salvador quickens our pastoral instincts in their desire to reach a balanced understanding of and support for the justice which our people are seeking in fear and hope.

APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES

Using the three ecclesiological criteria stated above, we are in a position to judge the relationship of the Church to the social groups which organise to struggle for justice in the political sphere. From the principles we should be able to work out what these organisations can hope for, or even demand, from the Church in accordance with its mission and what cannot be expected because it is outside the Church's competence.

Let us therefore continue our dialogue by applying the principles to various problems presented by the Church's relations with the 'popular organisations'.

1. *A relation of origin*

There are some 'popular organisations' which are known to be of Christian inspiration and even have names which reflect this. Their historical origin is closely linked with the life and activity of some Christian community. This fact, which is not exclusive to our period or our country, has been maliciously distorted here to the point of identifying the Church with some 'popular organisations'. The Church has been held responsible for the particular means chosen by these organisations with full autonomy and on their own responsibility to achieve their aims.

We have already explained that this relation of origin is possible and natural when we talked about the power of the Word of God, which nourishes the Christian faith of the ecclesial community, to awaken consciousness and make demands. In many peasants this Word has encouraged the growth, side by side with an active awareness, of faith and also of the dimension of justice which faith demands and this may also lead to a political vocation.

2. *Faith and politics : unity but not identification*

This is where the problem arises: faith and politics ought to be united in a Christian who has a political vocation but they are not to be identified. The Church wants both dimensions to be present in the total life of a Christian and has emphasised that faith which is lived out in isolation from life is not true faith. However, one also has to be aware that the task of the faith and a particular political task cannot be identified. The Christian with a political vocation should strive to achieve a synthesis between his Christian faith and his political action but without identifying them. Faith ought to inspire political action but not be mistaken for it.

It is important to be very clear about this when the same people who belong to ecclesial communities also belong to popular political organisations. If such people do not bear in mind this distinction between the Christian faith and their political activity, they can fall into one of two errors: either they substitute for the demands of the faith and Christian justice the demands of a particular political organisation, or they assert that only within a particular organisation can one develop the requirements of Christian justice that spring from the faith.

3. *What can and what cannot be demanded of the Church?*

Thus, when Christians organise themselves into any sort of association, be it a political party, trade union or 'popular organisation', they ought to be well aware of precisely what belongs to the realm of the faith and what to the realm of politics and respect the autonomy of each. Any political organiser ought to have a clear notion of what he can ask or even demand of the Church. He also ought to know

what he cannot request since he would be asking for something the Church cannot give and would be seriously compromising the legitimate autonomy of politics.

What we have said to clarify the nature and mission of the Church also makes clear what any organisation, Christian in inspiration or not, can ask of the Church. It can expect the Church to advocate civil rights, such as the right of association, the right to strike, the right to demonstrate and the right to free speech. No organisation, even if Christian in inspiration or name, can, however, require that the Church as such, or those of its symbols which are most clearly recognisable as ecclesial symbols (such as ceremonies, preaching, processions, etc.) should be turned into direct means of propaganda for political ends. We have already said that the Church, for its part, is always ready to make use of the only power it possesses, the power of the Gospel, to throw light on any sort of action which will better establish justice.

4. *A political Christian's loyalty to his faith*

This brings us to another problem which we want to outline as simply as possible. To struggle for justice in a 'popular organisation' it is not necessary either to be a Christian or explicitly to profess faith in Christ. One can be a good politician or work hard to bring about a more just society without being a Christian provided that one respects, and takes account of, the human and social value of the individual.

Those, however, who claim to be Christians, and who organise as such, have the duty of confessing their faith in Christ and, in their social and political activity, of using methods that are consonant with their faith.

We well understand that at times it is difficult to distinguish what is specifically Christian from what is not and that the Christian faith, being an historical religion, meets new situations which require new answers. To that extent we understand how confusion can arise in a new situation. One thing must, however, be quite clear: that what is final and absolute for a Christian, even for one involved in political activity, has to be faith in God and the need to achieve justice according to the Kingdom of God.

We also understand that political activity tends to absorb, indeed to monopolise, people's interest. This is a perfectly normal phenomenon of human enthusiasm. However, there arises at times a tension between two loyalties, loyalty to the faith and loyalty to the organisation. At times it will not be easy to live out this tension and here, too, as with everything that is new, it will be necessary to learn by trial and error. It is, however, our pastoral duty, even taking into account the difficulties we have outlined, to remind you that, however great this tension between the two loyalties, the final and definitive loyalty of a Christian can never be to an organisation, no matter what advantages it may offer, but to God and to the poor, who are the "least of the brethren" of Jesus Christ.

5. Authenticity not instrumentalisation

We therefore urge Christians who belong, formally or in practice, to any organisation with just social, political and economic aims to profess their faith openly so that it becomes their ultimate point of reference and they can grow in it. Yet, in their theoretical convictions and in detailed applications, they must not fall into the temptation of pride and intransigence, as though the legitimate political choice to which their faith has led them were the only way of working wholeheartedly for justice.

We would also remind them of the duty of expressing their faith in loyal solidarity with the Church and openness to the transcendence of God through the sacramental signs of His grace, through prayer and meditation on the Word of God. This is the only way to ensure that the commitment to justice and the Christian political vocation grow in parallel. This mutual interaction between an explicit faith and dedication to justice will be the guarantee that one's faith is not in vain, but is accompanied by works, and at the same time that the justice one is seeking is indeed the justice of the Kingdom of God.

However, if some Christians, having been moved in the first instance by their Christian faith to take up a stance in favour of the poor, sadly have come to lose that faith and now think it useless, we urge them to be sincere and not to

exploit a faith which they no longer share to achieve political objectives, no matter how just.

6. *Not everybody should be pushed into joining an organisation*

A Christian cannot be forced to join a specific political party or organisation. It must be remembered, on the one hand, that every human activity has, and cannot avoid having, political repercussions in the broad sense and so constitutes an inescapable degree of political involvement, a certain capacity for deciding between different political courses and, above all, a strong critical sense. On the other hand, it must be remembered that not every Christian has a political vocation, that is to say, the qualities and the desire necessary to fight for justice by specifically political means.

There are other means of carrying on this struggle, for example, education for liberation (Medellin), an evangelisation aware of human rights and the process of the liberation of peoples (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 30 and 32).

Politics, as a vocation, as a legitimate dimension of man and of the Christian, has no right to be considered the only possible way to perform the inescapable duty of every Salvadorean to work for the establishment of a more just order in our country.

We are not saying this to encourage inactivity or idleness but so that everyone may think about his vocation to devote his life to the service of others.

7. *Priests and laity in hierarchical collaboration*

We now want to address ourselves to our beloved clergy and to those respected laymen who, like the clergy, work closely with the hierarchy and therefore need a special commission or authorisation which makes them, through this work, to some degree representatives of the teaching and ministry of the Church among the people. Our pastoral activity is becoming continually more aware of the total liberation demanded of us by the Gospel, the authoritative teaching of the bishops of the universal Church and that of the Latin American bishops assembled at Medellin.

It is becoming increasingly clearer that the call to conversion addressed to all men is more effective and authentic when it follows the Gospel strategy of taking the Good News of salvation first to the poor, while reminding them too of the demands of their conversion (*Luke 4:18*).

This is our pastoral approach. It received its most authoritative and direct support from Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and its practical application to our dioceses in the San Salvador pastoral week (5-10 January 1976). We cannot stray from this approach without being unfaithful to our consciences, to the hopes of the people and, above all, to the Word of the Lord.

For this reason we urge our beloved priests and laity to guard the evangelical purity of this approach and, in guarding it, not to be afraid of the boldness it will often demand of us. We well understand the risks involved in this purity and boldness. It is normal, and indeed frequently happens, that priests and their closest lay collaborators, precisely because they want to preach a realistic and committed Gospel, should have a keen awareness of political problems and, as citizens, should feel more drawn towards one party or 'popular organisation' than to another. Likewise it is understandable that, when they are asked, they will work to guide, in a Christian direction, the political activities of Christians striving for justice.

It is, however, our duty to remind them that, in whatever priestly or pastoral work they are asked to perform by individuals, parties or organisations, they should make it their first concern to be animators and guides in faith and in justice which faith demands in accordance with the general Christian principles we have started here.

This is the priceless, necessary and irreplaceable service we have to offer the world. In dealing with the detailed problems resulting from day-to-day political activity, politicians and experts are usually better qualified to make analyses and suggest solutions. In any case, the priest's task is to provide the stimulus which comes from the Spirit of the Lord. This must be related to actual situations but also an authentic stimulus in faith. The priest's main job is to keep alive the Gospel standards of thought and action, to remind people, as Jesus did, of the love of the Father

for men and to urge them on to follow Jesus in implanting the Kingdom of God among men. The fulfilment of this task will always be partial and limited but the inspiration and help that a priest can give towards it will be of immeasurable value for the faith of the whole Church. It will bring together, without identifying the two or reducing one to the other, the dimension of faith and the need for justice. It will ensure — so we believe as Christians — that real advances in justice are in accordance with God's plan, without which no social progress can be genuine or lasting.

If, in an exceptional case, a priest were asked to work more closely in the political process—and the case were made more exceptional because the priest would be acting in a supplementary role which has nothing to do with the normal vocation and ministry of a priest—it would be for the bishop, after a frank discussion with the priest in the light of faith, to make a christian judgement on the apostolic value of the work in question.

Lay people who have been taken into the service of the Church by means of a special hierarchial commission, catechists, celebrants of the Word and so on, must not forget this fact, which makes them particular representatives of the hierarchy and of its ministry and teaching. Just as priests and bishops ought to be, so too are they a sign of unity of all the Church's children, whether in the local or in the universal Church. This responsibility, which gives them a leading and unifying role within the people of God, ought to make them careful about sympathising with, or joining, any 'popular organisation'. If playing an active role within an organisation deprives such a person of the credibility and efficiency among the people of God which he needs for his pastoral work, then there is a strong pastoral reason why he ought, after serious reflection before the Lord, to choose between the two activities.

8. *Non-Christian organisations*

Our reflections on the Church and 'popular organisations' have hitherto been concerned chiefly with organisations that are professedly Christian. We have not, however, forgotten that many of our Salvadorean brothers are active in organisations which do not profess to be Christian. Much of what has already been said is equally true of these as

of the Christian organisations in their relationship with the Church. The fundamental criteria have already been stated: support for the human rights of association, especially when the situation in the country leads one to think of such organisations as among the most important means for establishing justice; support also for the freedom which every individual has to make his own choices and not to be forced to join this or that group; support for the just ends of any organisation; support for the autonomy of the political and social activities of the organisations, just as the Church requires any person or organisation to respect the autonomy of its own nature and its mission and not to use it or subordinate it to any aims of such an organisation. The Church also has the right and duty to exercise, in relation to any organisation, Christian or not, its prophetic function of encouraging what is keeping with the revelation of God in the Gospel and of denouncing all that is in contradiction to this revelation and constitutes the sin of the world.

There is, however, a further connection, more fundamental and based on faith, between the Church and 'popular organisations' even if they do not profess to be Christian. The Church believes that the action among men of the Spirit who raised the dead Christ is greater than itself. Far beyond the confines of the Church, Christ's redemption is powerfully at work. The strivings of individuals and groups, even if they do not profess to be Christians, derive their energy from the Spirit of Jesus. The Church will try to see them in this way in order to purify them, encourage and incorporate them, equally with the efforts of Christians, into the overall plan of Christian redemption.

We are well aware that, despite our intentions and all our efforts to give adequate guidance about the political dimension of the faith of our brothers, especially of the peasants, there are still many questions waiting to be answered. Much thinking remains to be done. We must do it together, pastors and people of God, never separated from our union in Christ. We must do it in the light of our faith and of the social situation of our country.

(To be Concluded)

BOOK REVIEWS

Secularist Road

Amsterdam to Nairobi by Ernest W. Lefever; Ethics and Public Policy Studies, Georgetown University, USA; pp. 114; \$5.00.

The Fraudulent Gospel by Bernard Smith. Foreign Affairs Publishing Co., 139, Petersham Rd., Richmond, Surrey; pp. 139; £1/\$2.00.

A Study in Syncretism by John Cotter; Canadian Intelligence Publications, Box 130, Flesherton, Ontario N0 1E0, Canada; £1/Canadian \$3.00.

Christian Terror by Father Arthur Lewis; Rhodesia Christian Group, P.O. Box MP 177, Mount Pleasant, Salisbury, Zimbabwe; pp. 80; no price stated.

Reports have it that when the suggestion was made, at the National Pastoral Congress last May, that the Catholic Church in this country should seek affiliation with the British Council of Churches, delegates applauded enthusiastically.

Before any further steps are taken in that direction—and I hope none will have been taken before the publication of these lines—I would advise a reading, with certain reservations, of Ernest W. Lefever's, *Amsterdam to Nairobi* and Bernard Smith's, *The Fraudulent Gospel*. Lefever's essay, though purporting to deal with the World Council of Churches and the Third World, I found useful as a brief record of the W.C.C.'s evolution from its earliest days until the present. It is for this reason that I recommend it. Additionally, it has nine very useful appendices in the shape of W.C.C. reports, which are relevant to the Author's text and of very considerable topical interest.

Where the essay appears to me to fall down badly is in its Author's attempted analysis of the present stance and outlook of the W.C.C. Lefever notes the startling change in outlook of that Body over recent years from concern with God and the world *for God's sake* to what amounts to an involvement with the affairs of mankind, particularly the poor and the oppressed, to the *virtual exclusion of God*

and the supernatural. One looks in vain in his pages for any attempted analysis of this drastic and disastrous change of outlook and activity. His complaint is not so much with the mental mutation itself as with its present bias, which is loaded against the Capitalist West, whilst remaining notoriously unmindful of the oppression dealt out by the Communist East to its many victims. In other words, where Lefever is concerned, the trouble with the W.C.C. is not its adoption of secular humanitarianism as a substitute religion, but, rather, the direction in which its increasingly secular thrust is pointed—away from Communist oppression and against that for which the Capitalist West—here taken to include the National Security States of Latin America, South Africa, South Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia and others—is responsible. For him, the crime of the World Council of Churches is not its total involvement in the affairs of men to the exclusion of God, but the selective nature of that involvement which reveals it as increasingly favourable to Marxist advance; so favourable, indeed, that the operations of the W.C.C. could be described with accuracy as in aid of that advance. They could be, indeed, but the basic and all-important question remains; is the W.C.C. concerned that Communism should advance because it is concerned with the secular *or* is it concerned with the secular because it is concerned that Communism should advance? The two are not the same. The latter implies an initial and basic option for Communism—with undertones of conspiratorial machinations—which has led the W.C.C. to an exclusively secular involvement in aid of the extension of Communist Power. This view is naive and unsupported by significant evidence. It will satisfy many Christians at popular level. There are traces of it in the four books mentioned at the head of this article. It leads to the unfortunate conclusion that the secularist Capitalist West is the only effective barrier to Communist advance and that it is the duty of Christians to defend it, warts and all, as it now is. This is the philosophy that for long motivated the Rhodesia Christian Group, which has now moved its Headquarters to South Africa, and which continues to motivate its counterpart in that country. I do not doubt the sincerity of those who hold

this point of view, but I regard it as disastrously mistaken. I would remind any of them who may chance on these lines, that it would be quite wrong of them to brand me as a Communist for writing them.

I have been considering the latter of the two suggestions put forward above, along with its implications. Turning to the former—that the W.C.C. is concerned with Communism because its primary concern is now wholly with the secular, I have no hesitation in saying that this is correct. The W.C.C. has come to be concerned with Communism *advance because* of its secularism, not with secularism because of its Communism. There is no conspiracy here in the strict sense of the word. There is something far worse; a relapse into the secular by leading—and not so leading—members of those churches which are affiliated to the W.C.C., a relapse which is shared, incidentally, by a not insignificant segment of their counterparts within the Catholic Church. One inevitable effect of this relapse into the secular which has seized Christians of this type, is their conversion, at the very least, into Marxist allies. This has to be so. Marxism is a religion of this world; so, too, is the religion of the desupernaturalised or secularist Christian. Having lost his hold on God, he finds it in liberated man. His goal of a new heaven on a new earth, to be created by his own efforts, is identical, at base, with that of the Marxist. They are natural allies.

Bernard Smith shows his awareness of this situation, particularly in Chapter XI, of his extremely readable booklet, *The Fraudulent Gospel*. I am not too sure that the devoted Anglican Priest, Father Arthur Lewis, or Mr. John Cotter, whose *Study in Syncretism* contains a great deal of interesting information, are as aware as I would hope that the desupernaturalisation of an influential Christian minority lies at the core of the trouble that afflicts the World Council of Churches and, indeed, the Catholic Church itself today. I only wish Bernard Smith had devoted a greater part of the contents of his booklet to an analysis in depth of the W.C.C.'s current gospel of "secular ecumenism", instead of illustrating so extensively the selective nature of its humanitarian moralising.

Enough has been said, I think, to show that, given the secularism of the W.C.C., its alliance to the point of near-identification with Marxism is inevitable. This must not be taken to imply, however, a Christian duty to see and support the Capitalist West as the only alternative to Communist aggression, for the Capitalist West has its own brand of secularism, which is increasingly pervasive and in derogation of human dignity. Self-contained technological man is in very many ways as secularist a concept as self-contained Marxist man; which means that the polarization between Communist East and Capitalist West is by no means as marked as some of the West's Christian defenders would have us believe. The Christian must be ruthlessly objective in his analysis of each system. He can bind himself in support to neither. He can bind himself only to Christ and, in the light of His teaching and the strength of the New Life he shares in love with Christ, go out to the poor and oppressed *on account* of Christ and not *instead* of Him. That is his vocation. In its present condition, the World Council of Churches is quite incapable of encouraging him to follow it. Only the Catholic Church can do that. It is high time a beginning, at least, was made.

Paul Crane, S.J.

ECCLESIASTICAL VANDALISM (or church bashing)

It is madness
Or hatred of beauty
Sadistic instinct
Or narcissus complex?
Which drives the Iconoclast
To smash with rabid fury
The sacred things
Which have always
Tinged with deep emotion
The stark Reality
Of the Faith.

Anonymous.

ST. DUTHAC'S BOOK SERVICE

Catholicism & Modernity

By Prof. J. Hitchcock. Price £8.70. (\$16.00).

The Church Learned and the Revolt of the Scholars

By Philip Trower. Price £1.40. (\$2.50).

The Battle for the American Church

Price £8.80. (\$16.20).

St. Thomas Aquinas, Orthodoxy, & Neo-Modernism in the Church

By Renee Casin. Price £1.80. (\$3.40).

Papal Teachings : the Liturgy

By the Benedictine Monks of Solesnes. Price £3.70.
(\$6.70).

Transformation in Christ

By Dietrich von Hildebrand. Price £4.55. (\$8.50).
(also all works still in print by this author).

Land of Crosses

By Michael Bourdeaux. (The struggle for religious freedom in Lithuania 1919-1978). Price £3.75. (\$7.00).

Where we got the Bible

By Henry C. Graham. Price £1.60. (\$3.00).

The Acting Person

A Contribution to Phenomonological Anthropology.
By Pope John Paul II. Price £8.25. (\$15.00).

(All prices include postage)

Write for full Book List to :

ST. DUTHAC'S BOOK SERVICE

39 Blenheim Park Road, S. Croydon, CR2 6BG, G.B.

THE CRISIS IN THE CHURCH —

regarding this subject, have you read Michael Davies on:

THE TRIDENTINE MASS

Reduced from 40p plus p&p to 40p/\$1.00 post free.

THE NEW MASS

Reduced from 40 plus p&p to 40p/\$1.00 post free.

THE ROMAN RITE DESTROYED

Reduced from 50p plus p&p to 45p/\$1.00 post free.

**We will supply a complete set of the above for
£1.00 / \$2.50 post free**

THE ORDER OF MELCHISEDECH

A penetrating study on the new rite of Ordination, and the attempt to circumvent *Apostolicae Curae*. (Paper 232 pp 8 illus.)

Special offer to *Christian Order* readers: £3.00/\$7.00 post free.

APOLOGIA PRO MARCEL LEFEBVRE

No one can talk knowledgeably about the Archbishop's case without first mastering the complete documentation, for and against presented in this book.

Paper 460 pages. 25 illus. £4.00 plus 75p p&p.

Available, for cash with order, subject to availability, from:

AUGUSTINE PUBLISHING CO.

Chulmleigh, Devon EX18 7HL, U.K.

Free list of traditional Catholic titles sent on request.